



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL

GOVERNOR

HAROLD LEGGETT, Ph.D.

SECRETARY

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Contact: Rodney Mallett

Telephone: 225.219.3964

DEQ announces change in solid waste permitting process

BATON ROUGE – As of June 9, Department of Environmental Quality's solid waste permitting process will include a 180-day timeframe regarding its oversight responsibilities for solid waste disposal facilities.

Under an Executive Order signed by the Governor, prior to DEQ's issuance of an order to commence operations, any solid waste disposal facility permittee, except for a transfer station, must provide the department with a written resolution or authorization from the appropriate municipal or parish governing authority where the facility will be located. This must be dated within 180 days prior to the order to commence and must state that the facility is in compliance with all existing zoning and land use restrictions. Further, DEQ will immediately take all necessary steps to initiate rule-making to incorporate the requirements of this order.

Last year, under DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett, DEQ began to undertake a review of the Solid Waste Permit Program in order to streamline the permitting process, and address numerous issues raised by various stakeholders. Regulatory changes will continue to be necessary to address many issues, and it is possible that current state laws may also require revision. This order reflects another reform instituted as a part of this ongoing comprehensive revision of the program designed to provide all stakeholders efficiency, transparency and predictability.

Prior to this Executive Order, a significant lag time could exist between a permit applicant's submittal of documentation and DEQ's order to commence operations. Formerly, DEQ was without express regulatory authority regarding changes in local land use restrictions and zoning ordinances by local governments and any impact those changes could have upon economic development after a permit application was filed.

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